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2 *Library*

HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

A N N U A L R E P O R T

of the

M E D I C A L O F F I C E R O F H E A L T H

James C. Sleight,
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

and

S E N I O R S A N I T A R Y I N S P E C T O R

John Snowdon,
M.S.I.A., C.S.I.B.

FOR THE YEAR 1955.

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1955

Chairman: Mr. F.N. Gingell, M.B.E., J.P., C.C.

Vice-Chairman: Mr. H.C. Williamson.

Mrs.C. West	Mr. L.T. Fowler
Mr. E. Ackroyd	Mr. N.H. Jones
Mr. A. Clark	Mr. C.F. Putterill, C.A.
Mr. L.S. Collingridge	Mr. D.E. Sanders
Mr. C.W. Curl	Mr. L. Townend
Mr. F.M. Drake	Mr. V.E. Truss
Mr. L.W. Edgell	

Public Health Committee

Chairman: Mr. A. Clark

Mrs.C. West	Mr. D.E. Sanders
Mr. E. Ackroyd	Mr. L. Townend
Mr. L.S. Collingridge	Mr. V.E. Truss
Mr. F.M. Drake	Mr. H.C. Williamson
Mr. L.T. Fowler	

URBAN DISTRICT OF HARPENDEN

To the Chairman and Councillors of the
Harpenden Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my report on the health of Harpenden for the year 1955.

The general health of the district remained good throughout the year, and especially in the second half of the year the number of cases of infectious diseases was quite exceptionally small.

Though the infant mortality has risen to 12 per 1,000 births, this is still well below that of the country as a whole and, in any case, as I have said before, this rate, in dealing with small numbers, is bound to fluctuate very markedly from year to year. The actual number of deaths was three.

Both the birth rate and the general death rate have risen slightly, but again in dealing with comparatively small numbers I do not think there is any cause for alarm. For what it is worth, you will note that the cancer death rate has fallen, whilst the death rate from heart disease has risen. Now heart disease, in most cases, represents the terminal failure of the heart to keep going and is, of course, inevitable.

To you Mr. Chairman, Lady and Gentlemen, I wish to record my sincere thanks for all consideration and help you have at all times shown me, and to my staff I wish to record my sincere thanks for their effort and conscientious performance of their duties.

I am also deeply indebted to the Chief Clerk and Secretary in the Divisional Health Office for their assistance in the preparation of the statistics for this report and for the many extra duties carried out by them during the year, which were actually outside their Divisional Health Office duties.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

J.C. SLEIGH,

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	..	..	..	..	3,157
Registrar General's estimate of resident population	..			..	15,200
Number of inhabited houses on the Rate Books:					
Inhabited dwelling-houses (including flats and huts but excluding caravans)	..		..	..	4,837
Shops with living accommodation	..		..	..	82
Licensed premises with living accommodation	..		..	..	23
Rateable Value	..	..	..	..	£158,240
Sum represented by a penny rate (estimated)	..		..	..	£620

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Live Births - Legitimate	..	115	118	233
Illegitimate	..	3	-	3
Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population	..	..	..	15.53
Still Births	..	6	2	8
Still Birth Rate (i.e. per 1,000 total live and still births)	..	..	..	32.79
Still Birth Rate (i.e. per 1,000 of live and still births)	..	..	..	0.53
Deaths	..	64	95	159
Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population	..	..	..	10.46

		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Deaths from Pregnancy,</u>				
<u>Childbirth, or Abortion.</u>		-	-	-
Rate per 1,000 (total live				
and stillbirths)	..	..	..	-
<u>Deaths of Infants under 1 Year.</u>				
Legitimate	..	2	1	3
Illegitimate	..	-	-	-
Death Rate of Infants under				
1 year of age (all infants				
per 1,000 live births)	..	..	..	12.71
Neonatal Death Rate	..	..	..	8.47

Births. The number of births during 1955 was 236.

Deaths. There were 159 deaths.

The Infant Mortality rate of 12.71 per 1,000 live births is three times that of the rather freak figure of last year but is less than the Country as a whole. Two of the infant deaths were due to congenital defects - one infant lived for 1 day - the other for less than 24 hours. The third infant lived for 7 months and death was due to bronchitis.

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CAUSES OF DEATH

<u>Cause.</u>		<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory ..	-	-	
2.	Tuberculosis, other ..	-	-	
3.	Syphilitic Diseases ..	-	-	
4.	Diphtheria ..	-	-	
5.	Whooping Cough ..	-	-	
6.	Meningococcal infections ..	-	-	
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis ..	-	-	
8.	Measles ..	-	-	
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases ..	-	-	
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach ..	2	2	) 25 Cancer.
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus ..	2	2	
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast ..	-	5	
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus ..	-	-	
14.	Other lymphatic and malignant Neoplasms ..	4	8	
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia ..	-	-	
16.	Diabetes ..	-	-	
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system ..	6	20	
18.	Coronary disease, angina ..	14	11	) 54 Heart Disease
19.	Hypertension ..	3	4	
20.	Other heart disease ..	10	12	
21.	Other circulatory disease ..	4	5	
22.	Influenza ..	2	-	
23.	Pneumonia ..	-	6	
24.	Bronchitis ..	6	1	
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system ..	1	1	
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ..	-	-	
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ..	-	2	
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis ..	-	1	
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate ..	3	-	
C/fwd ..		57	80	

	<u>Cause.</u>		<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
		B/fwd ..	57	80
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	..	-	-
31.	Congenital malformations	..	1	1
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	..	2	11
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	..	-	-
34.	All other accidents	..	4	3
35.	Suicide	..	-	-
36.	Homicide and operations of war	..	-	-
			<hr/>	<hr/>
		<u>Totals</u> ..	64	95
			<hr/>	<hr/>

Cancer Death Rate (per 1,000 of estimated population) - 1.64

Heart Disease

Death Rate (per 1,000 of estimated population) - 3.55

The cancer death rate is slightly down and the rate for Heart disease slightly up from last year.

It can safely be said that the majority of cases under the heading "Heart Disease" could be more accurately described as death from old age.

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SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Welfare Centres and Clinics.

The County Council Child Welfare Clinics are now held at No. 40 Luton Road on the first and third Wednesday afternoons of each month and at Batford J.M.I. School on the second and fourth Wednesday afternoons.

The Ophthalmic and Dental clinics are at 40 Luton Road by appointment.

This arrangement is working very well. At Batford we are deeply indebted to the Headmaster, Mr. Bridges, for his enthusiastic co-operation.

National Health Service Act.

The Divisional Administration of the health services administered by the Local Health Authority, the County Council, continues to work very smoothly and an increasing amount of detailed administration is being passed out to Divisional Health Offices from Hertford. I need only mention the Home Help service, Ambulance service and supervision of County Council cars.

The records available in the Divisional Health Office on Local Health Authority work are of the greatest value to me in my local Sanitary Authority (Medical Officer of Health) work, especially in what is my most difficult job, assessing medical points for housing applications.

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Ambulance Service.

I am indebted to Divisional Officer R. Hughes for the following information:

District of Harpenden.

Year ending 31st December, 1955.

Details of the calls dealt with during the above period are given below:

	<u>Accident.</u>	<u>Sudden Illness.</u>	<u>Removals.</u>	<u>Maternity.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Mileage.</u>
1955.	99	26	3,179	42	3,346	25,426
Increase and decrease over 1954.	+4	-4	-572	+9	-563	-6,767

The figures show a reduction in the demand on the Ambulance service for Harpenden, but I am sorry to say that the figures for my division as a whole show a considerable increase.

The Bedford Utilicon sitting case Vehicle stationed at St. Albans has been used for a very large number of cases in the Harpenden area and the figures shown are not strictly comparable with those of last year.

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Hospitals.

The Harpenden Memorial Hospital forms part of the Luton and Hitchin Group administered by the Management Committee under the North-West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board. Four House Committees have been appointed by the Management Committee, one of which is concerned with this Hospital and for this purpose the Hospital is linked with Welwyn and Stevenage.

Statistics.

Year ended December 1955.

<u>Bed complement</u>	-	Surgical and Medical	..	18	
		Maternity	..	<u>12</u>	30
<u>Average daily number of available beds</u>			..		30
<u>Admissions</u>	..	..	..		589
<u>Number of Births</u>	-	Live	..	..	264
		Still	..	..	5
<u>Average daily number of occupied beds</u>			..		20.57

Out-patient Departments:

<u>Physiotherapy Dept.</u>	<u>New Patients.</u>	<u>Attendances.</u>
In -patients	58	387
Out-patients	674	8,234
<u>Casualty Dept.</u>	610	771
<u>Specialist Consultations</u>	321	386

General Nutrition.

Poor nutrition is rare and usually is the result of fussing parents indulging food fads. Underweight children often are of small birth weight or have small parents.

I must emphasise that there is no fixed weight for age. Both weight and height vary within pretty wide limits in completely healthy children.

Nursing in the Home.

The District Nursing Sisters are available for all cases of domiciliary nursing which includes Midwifery and General Nursing and in all cases where there is illness in the home where a request is made personally or at the request of the Doctor in attendance.

All notifications of measles and whooping cough and diseases where skilled nursing is particularly necessary, are passed on at once to the District Nurse so that if she has not already been called in she can offer her services.

Home Help Service.

This service is administered by the Hertfordshire County Council and provides domestic help for households where such help is required owing to the presence of any person who is ill, lying-in, an expectant mother, mentally defective, aged or a child not over school age, within the meaning of the Education Act, 1944.

The Organiser, who is a member of the Divisional Health Department Staff, receives requests from doctors, health visitors, midwives, hospital almoners and welfare organisations. No one is denied help on financial grounds and every case can be assessed according to the family income.

The service is proving extremely popular. So much so, in fact, that we are unable to provide all the help that is desired because we cannot get sufficient numbers of Home Helps. This is particularly difficult in the period Christmas - Easter when, of course, illness is at its height and one must remember that illness affects Home Helps as well as other members of the community.

Health Visiting.

There are two Health Visitors in the area. They are employed for the visiting of persons in their homes for the purpose of giving advice as to the care of young children, old persons suffering from illness, and expectant or nursing mothers, and as to the measures necessary to prevent the spread of infection.

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SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.

The Public Water Supply is provided by the Harpenden Water Company from boreholes at Shakespeare Road and East Hyde, both fairly near the River Lee which is well known to be highly polluted with sewage. The water is, therefore, chlorinated, a very necessary precaution. I am glad to say that we have received considerably fewer complaints in regard to taste than in previous years.

Sewage Disposal.

I am indebted to Mr. H. Pettingale, the Council's Engineer and Surveyor for the following details:

The total quantity of sewage treated at the Sewage Works was 224,520,000 gallons compared with 241,775,000 gallons in 1954.

The rainfall was 23.60 inches compared with 31.40 inches in 1954.

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SECTION D.

HOUSING.

Slum Clearance.

Under Section 1 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, Local Authorities were required to submit to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government their proposals for dealing with unfit houses in their areas. After a survey of the district, a return was submitted showing that 70 houses would probably be dealt with within the next ten years under the Act. At the same time, a letter was sent to the owners of the houses concerned drawing their attention to the condition of the properties.

Subsequently the Minister asked the Council to consider whether their programme could be expedited in view of the small number of houses concerned and the fact that new houses can now be built without restriction, according to local needs. To this the Council gave an assurance that every effort would be made to reduce the period for dealing with the houses. Furthermore, the Minister was informed that the Council intended to deal with twelve houses in the year commencing 1st September, 1955.

Re-housing.

This is still the greatest problem confronting the Council. The points scheme is in use and in addition all certificates from medical practitioners requesting priority for any of their patients are submitted to me as Medical Officer of Health. I have the power to allocate additional points on medical grounds without disclosing my reasons for doing so. In extreme cases I also have the power of giving absolute priority but this power I am very unwilling to use as, of course, if this power were abused it would ruin the whole points scheme with which I am completely in favour.

The duty thus imposed on me is a very difficult one

and I have no doubt that on occasions I shall make mistakes but I can assure the Council that I shall do my utmost to make their housing scheme work as fairly as humanly possible, bearing in mind the very large and urgent demand for houses.

Points are allotted independently of me for such conditions as overcrowding. I therefore never give points for conditions which already attract points under the Housing points scheme.

Number of new houses and flats erected during the year:

(a)	By the Local Authority	..	33
(b)	By private enterprise	..	127

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:

(i)	(a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health and Housing Acts)	..	..	238
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	..	..	673
(ii)	(a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (i) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations 1925	..	..	-
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	..	..	-
(iii)		Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	..	..	1
(iv)		Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	2

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2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notice:

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	57
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during this year:

A. Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(i) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	-
---	----	----	----	---

(ii) Number of dwelling houses rendered fit after service of Formal Notices:

(a) By Owners	-
---------------	----	----	----	---

(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	-
---	----	----	----	---

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(i) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	91
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(ii) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of Formal Notices:

(a) By Owners	5
---------------	----	----	----	---

(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	-
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SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Food Poisoning Outbreaks.

<u>Total number of outbreaks.</u>	<u>Number of Cases.</u>	<u>Number of Deaths.</u>	<u>Organisms or other Agents responsible with number of out- breaks of each.</u>	<u>Foods involved with number of outbreaks of each.</u>
-	1	-	Salmonella Chester (1)	-

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1955.

<u>Disease.</u>		<u>Total Cases.</u>	<u>Deaths.</u>
Scarlet Fever	..	6	-
Whooping Cough	..	32	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	..	3	-
Measles	..	247	-
Diphtheria	..	-	-
Pneumonia	..	3	-
Dysentery	..	-	-
Encephalitis Lethargica	..	-	-
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	..	-	-
Erysipelas	..	1	-
Meningococcal Infection	..	1	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	..	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	..	-	-
Malaria	..	1	-
Undulant Fever	..	-	-
Cerebro Spinal Fever	..	-	-
Infective Hepatitis	..	2	-
Food Poisoning	..	1	-
Gastro Enteritis	..	-	-
Pneumococcal Meningitis	..	-	-

Smallpox. There were no cases during 1955.

Vaccination:

Number of Persons vaccinated (or re-vaccinated) during 1955.

<u>Age at 31st December:</u>	<u>Under 1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2-4</u>	<u>5-15</u>	<u>15 or over</u>	<u>Total</u>
Number vaccinated	192	11	5	-	4	212
Number re-vaccinated	-	-	1	14	29	44

Number of cases specially reported during period (age groups as above)

- Nil -

Number of births registered for Harpenden	..	236
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Primary vaccination rate per 100 births	..	89.8
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Of the total number of vaccinations (256), 40 were carried out at County Council clinics.

A primary vaccination rate of 89 per 100 births is very satisfactory indeed, being considerably higher than my past experience when vaccination was compulsory!

I would emphasise that the ideal age for primary vaccination is under one year of age, when the risk of complications is practically nil. Complications do occur when the primary vaccination is done later in life, but not when re-vaccination takes place at an older age. Vaccination is compulsory for many people who wish to travel abroad or take up certain employment, and it is well worth while having all babies vaccinated so that no risk may be run if they have to be vaccinated in adult life.

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Diphtheria Immunisation:

Number of children who completed a Full Course for Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including temporary residents) in 1955:

Age at date of Final Injection.

<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>5 - 15.</u>
203	14
Total:	217

Number of children who were given a secondary or reinforcing injection (i.e. subsequent to complete Full Course):

Total: 179

Births for the same area	..	..	236
Primary Immunisation Rate per 100 births		..	91.9

The numbers shown above include 111 children who received combined Whooping Cough - Diphtheria immunisation injections.

Although the primary immunisation rate has fallen from the freak figure of 108 it is still very satisfactory considering that immunisation was interfered with over a long period by the odd cases of poliomyelitis occurring in my area. It is very pleasing to note too that the primary immunisation rate of Whooping Cough 82.6, is getting very close to that of Diphtheria.

We are now using the combined Diphtheria and Whooping Cough vaccine (since 1/4/55). Results have been excellent and no ill-effects have been noted.

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Whooping Cough:

On the 16th March, 1953, the County Council scheme under Section 26 of the National Health Service Act 1946 was extended to cover protection against Whooping Cough.

It is obviously wise to immunise children as soon as possible, because by far the greatest danger occurs in the first year.

Number of children who completed a Full Course for Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including temporary residents) in 1955:

Age at date of final injection:

<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>5 - 15.</u>
189	6
<u>Total - 195</u>	
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Primary Immunisation Rate per 100 births 82.6

These figures include 111 children who received a primary immunisation with a combined Whooping Cough - Diphtheria vaccine.

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I think it might be profitable for me to set down the recommended periods for all immunisation procedure, including vaccination. They are as follows:

Primary vaccination against Smallpox at 3 months of age.

First combined injection against Whooping Cough and Diphtheria at 4 months of age.

Second injection at 5 months and third at 6 months.

The third combined injection may be postponed to 12 months.

Poliomyelitis:

There were 3 cases of poliomyelitis notified during 1955, two were paralytic, one non-paralytic.

Tuberculosis:

Cases on Register as at 31st December, 1955.

<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-pulmonary</u>		<u>Totals</u>
<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	
33 (29)	27 (25)	4 (4)	8 (10)	72 (68)

Figures as at 31st December, 1954, are in brackets.

REPORT OF THE SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my third report on the work of the Public Health and Housing Department and it is gratifying to report that during the year 1955 steady advancement has been made in all branches of the work of the Department.

I am pleased to record that during the year a start was made to clear some of the temporary huts on the Milford Estate. These huts have been most invaluable in the past few years as emergency accommodation but their general condition now is such that they should be demolished without delay. Three unfit houses were demolished during the year and seven persons were found alternative accommodation.

Careful watch has been kept during the year on the transport, handling and distribution of meat and other foods and improvements in the general standard of food premises were constantly secured.

I should like to express my appreciation to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health and Housing Committees for the keen interest taken in the work of the Department and for their friendly and close support at all times.

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SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS

General Sanitation.

Public Health Acts	- primary inspections	..	168	
	re-inspections	..	267	
Cesspools	inspections and			
	re-inspections	..	8	
Disinfection	..	..	2	
Drainage	..	..	90	
Factories	..	..	124	
Housing Act	..	..	238	
Infectious Disease	..	..	23	
Movable Dwellings	..	..	166	
Rodent Control	..	..	2,280	*
Shops Act	..	..	104	
Water Supplies	..	..	6	
Smoke Observations	..	..	3	
Miscellaneous Visits	..	..	75	
Workplaces	..	..	3	
Petroleum Regulations	..	..	28	
Outworkers	..	..	4	
Pet Animals Act	..	..	4	
Refuse Collection and Disposal	..	..	9	
			<hr/>	
			3,602	

* Includes 1,954 visits made by the Council's Rodent Operative.

Food Hygiene.

Bakehouses	..	..	15	
Butchers Shops	..	..	58	
Dairies	..	..	30	
Foodshops and Stalls	..	..	126	
Ice Cream Premises	..	..	68	
Restaurants	..	..	65	
Milk distributors - sampling	..	..	51	
Fried Fish Shops	..	..	1	
Ice Cream Sampling	..	..	10	
Meat Inspection	..	..	4	
			<hr/>	
			428	

GENERAL SANITATION.

Complaints.

During the year, 149 complaints were received and dealt with; 101 of these were regarding infestations by rats and mice.

Disinfection.

Two premises were disinfected after cases of infectious disease with proprietary formaldehyde preparations and liquid disinfectants.

Drainage.

A considerable amount of work was carried out during the year in connection with the testing, alteration and repairs of existing drainage systems and 90 visits were made for that purpose. Following complaints of rat infestation, thorough checking of the drainage systems of all infested premises and those in the immediate vicinity was carried out.

The drainage systems of 160 new houses and flats constructed during the year were connected to the sewer.

Cesspools.

There were at the end of the year, 53 properties with cesspool drainage and in most cases the houses concerned are in scattered small groups where connection to main drainage is not practicable at the present time. Although it may be possible in due course to connect some of the properties with cesspools to main drainage, the majority will remain out of reach of public sewers for some time.

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Cesspool Emptying Service.

The Council bear the cost of one emptying of a cesspool each year for premises that are not within reasonable distance of the Council's sewers. This work was undertaken by the St. Albans Rural District Council and during the year 46 emptyings were carried out.

Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948.

The following table shows the number of registered factories within the district, the number of inspections, and details of defects:

<u>Premises.</u>	<u>Number on Register.</u>	<u>Inspections.</u>
Factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by the Local Authority.	4	6
Factories not included above in which section 7 is enforced.	64	91
Other premises in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	27	27
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	95	124
	==	==

<u>Defects.</u>	<u>Number found.</u>	<u>Remedied.</u>	<u>Referred by H.M. Inspector.</u>
Section 1 ..	1	1	-
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7.)	5	5	-
Other Offences ..	4	4	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	10	10	-
	==	==	==

Outworkers.

<u>Nature of Work</u>	<u>Number</u>
Wearing apparel - making etc ..	32
Brush Making ..	1
Novelties ..	1
	<u>34</u>
	==

Movable Dwellings.

During the year, the use of caravans as a means of human habitation did not decline and at the end of the year 25 licences were in force authorising the use of caravans under the provisions of Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936. In addition, 20 caravans continued to be stationed on the Council's temporary site at Milford Estate. Particular attention was paid to the sanitary accommodation, drainage, refuse disposal, and water supply to each dwelling, and for this purpose 166 inspections were made during the year.

Notices.

The following notices were served during the year. Compliance with notices was affected without recourse to legal proceedings.

Statutory Notices:

Section 45 - Public Health Act, 1936.

Notices served ..	2
Complied with by owners ..	1

Section 93 - Public Health Act, 1936.

Notices served ..	3
Complied with by owners ..	3

Informal Notices.

Notices served ..	91
Complied with by owners ..	73

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Rodent Control:

The extermination of rats and mice is carried out as a free service to the occupiers of private premises. A charge is made in respect of business premises at an hourly rate to cover the cost of labour, materials and administration.

One hundred and one complaints concerning infestations by rats and mice were received and dealt with, resulting in the treatment of 298 properties. For this purpose 1,954 visits were made and 253 dead rats were found.

The Council employ one Rodent Operative (Mr. E.A.C. Faram) for this work. Mr. Faram received training under the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Scheme.

Sewers:

In accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, a ten per cent test of sewer manholes and two treatments of infested sewers were carried out during the year. 70 manholes were test baited, of which 14 were found to be infested. 43 manholes were baited during the two treatments. 7 were found to be infested during the winter treatment and 4 during the summer treatment. The treatments were followed by a check of house drainage systems in infested areas.

Council Properties:

Careful supervision of the Council's Depots and Stores was maintained during the year and any infestation of the Sewage Works and Refuse Tip was dealt with by the Manager.

Wasps' Nests:

9 complaints were received of wasps' nests and these were all successfully treated by the Rodent Operative.

Shops:

There are 198 retail shops in the district. The provisions of the Shops Act, 1950, were administered and 144 visits were made for the purpose.

CONTROL OF FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES.

Meat Supply and Slaughtering Facilities.

No slaughterhouses within the Urban District were licensed during the year, but satisfactory slaughtering facilities for the area were available at the former Ministry of Food Slaughterhouse at Sandridge, in the St. Albans Rural District. Since de-control of slaughtering, however, some of the meat supply for the area has come from other sources and a careful check was therefore kept on the transport and handling of the meat.

The following meat and meat products were condemned as being unfit for human consumption at premises in Harpenden during the year:

Beef	..	..	42 lbs
Leg of Pork	..	..	23 lbs
Sausages	..	..	13 lbs
Tinned Meat and Meat Products	..	..	74 lbs
Tinned Ham	..	..	86 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs

Other Food Inspection:

The following foodstuffs were condemned as being unfit for human consumption, and destruction or salvage was arranged:

Tinned Fruit	..	..	112 lbs
Tinned Vegetables)	..	..	109 lbs
Soups and Fish )	..	..
Tinned Milk	..	..	10 tins

Legal Proceedings:

Proceedings were instituted against a firm of provision merchants in respect of three charges under Section 9 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938. One charge related to selling food (soup lentils containing mouse droppings) unfit for human consumption and the other two charges to having food in their possession for the purpose of sale similarly unfit for human consumption. Fines of £5 on the first charge and £10 on each of the second and third charges were imposed, together with £4:4:0d costs.

Food Premises:

Byelaws with respect to the Handling, Wrapping and Delivery of Food and Sale of Food in the Open Air were adopted by the Council in 1950.

By regular visiting and inspection, improvements were effected in hygienic conditions in foodshops, and retailers were generally co-operative in this respect. 474 visits of inspection were made to food premises, particular attention being given to cleanliness, water closet and washing facilities for the staff and protection of food from contamination.

13 premises in the district are registered for the manufacture and sale of sausages and one for the preparation and sale of fried fish and potatoes.

Ice-cream:

There are in the district 39 premises licensed for the sale or storage of ice-cream under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, and in each case the ice-cream is obtained from one of the well known large manufacturers. Practically all the ice-cream sold is pre-packed. No licences are in operation for the manufacture of ice-cream.

A number of vehicles from which ice-cream is sold move into the district from neighbouring towns and at present the effective control of the sale of ice-cream from such vehicles is exceedingly difficult since they invariably operate at week-ends and holidays.

During the year 10 samples of ice-cream were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Luton for examination, and the results are set out below:

<u>Type of Sample.</u>		<u>Grade.</u>				<u>Total.</u>
		<u>1.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>3.</u>	<u>4.</u>	
Pre-packed	..	5	2	-	-	7
Loose	..	1	2	-	-	<u>3</u>
						10
						—

N.B. Samples in Grades 1 and 2 are considered satisfactory.

Milk and Dairies Acts and Orders:

There are in the district 9 registered distributors of milk and three registered dairies.

The following licences were issued during the year:

Dealers' licences authorising the use of
the special designation.

Pasteurised	..	..	3
Sterilised	..	..	5
Tuberculin Tested	..		3

Supplementary licences authorising the use of
the special designation.

Pasteurised	..	..	2
Sterilised	..	..	2
Tuberculin Tested	..		2

There is one pasteurising plant in the district licensed by the Food and Drugs Authority, the Hertfordshire County Council.

Constant supervision of milk supplies was maintained and the following samples were taken during the year:

<u>Type of Milk</u>	<u>Number examined</u>	<u>Satis- factory</u>	<u>Unsatis- factory</u>
Pasteurised	41	41	-
T.T. (Farm Bottled)	33	28	5
T.T. (Pasteurised)	23	22	1
Sterilised Flavoured Milk	2	2	-
Bottle rinse	2	2	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	101	95	6
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Where unsatisfactory samples were obtained, further samples were procured and thorough investigations carried out in each instance.

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HOUSING.

The general condition of houses in the area is reasonably satisfactory and there is no "slum" problem as such. During the year one house was represented as being unfit for human habitation and every effort will be made to re-house the occupants of this house as soon as possible.

Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954:

This Act came into operation in September 1954 and amongst its important provisions it enabled landlords of privately owned houses to increase the rent in certain cases. It also safeguarded the tenants' interests enabling them to apply to the Local Authority for a Certificate of Disrepair where the tenant considered that his house was not in a reasonable condition. Where a Certificate of Disrepair has been granted in respect of a property, the rent of that property cannot be increased until the Certificate is revoked.

By the end of the year, one application for a Certificate of Disrepair was received and the necessary certificate was issued. A revocation Certificate in respect of a Certificate granted during 1954, was also issued.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT.

The Council now own 572 houses, 154 flats, 60 emergency hutted dwellings and 25 prefabricated bungalows, making a total of 811 housing units. In addition, the management of 70 houses belonging to a Workmen's Housing Association is the responsibility of the Department.

A start was made during the year to demolish the emergency hutted encampment and six huts were demolished during December. It is hoped that the bulk of the huts will be disposed of during 1956 as they have now become most unsatisfactory as living accommodation.

During the year, the following visits and inspections were made in the performance of the duties of housing management:

To applicants	..	..	205
Maintenance	..	..	1,212
Administration	..	..	160
Tenancies	..	..	245

60 applicants were re-housed during the year in permanent dwellings and a further 15 in temporary hutted accommodation.

Housing List:

The total number of applicants on the housing list at the 31st December 1955 was 336. This compares with 347 at the end of 1954 and 429 at the end of 1953.

A summary of applicants is given below:

<u>Housing applicants.</u>	<u>Active List.</u>	<u>Deferred List.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Married couples with children.	81	40	121
Married couples and engaged couples.	86	56	142
Single persons.	13	7	20
Old persons.	53	-	53
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	233	103	336
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Housing Allocations:

All housing accommodation is allocated strictly in accordance with the Council's points scheme. All applicants are required to have a five-year residential qualification within the Harpenden Urban District and no application is considered until it has been deposited for twelve months.

Points are awarded for health reasons, overcrowding, insanitary living conditions and shared accommodation. During the year a careful review of the points scheme was carried out in an attempt to reflect an applicant's real need of accommodation. This resulted in a slight reduction in the points awarded for residence in Harpenden, an increase in the points awarded for waiting time on the list after the first three years, and the setting up of a separate list for applicants occupying whole houses or self-contained flats.

Details of the points scheme are given below:

	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>SCHEME</u>	<u>Points</u>
Man and Wife (1 point each)	-		2
Widow or Widower	-		2
First child (either sex) over 10 years old	-		2
Each additional child over 10 years old	-		1
Each child under 10 years old	-		1
Expectant mother	-		1
War Service in Army, Navy, Merchant Navy,) Air Force and Military Nursing Services) during period 3rd September 1939 to 31st) March 1946:)			
For each complete year of service	-		$\frac{1}{4}$
For each complete year of service) overseas)	-		$\frac{1}{4}$ (additional)
Direction from District:			
For each year completed in civilian) occupation if directed away from the) District during the period 3rd Sept.) 1939 to 31st March 1946)	-		$\frac{1}{4}$
Each year of residence within the) Harpenden Urban District boundary) up to a maximum of 6 points)	-		$\frac{1}{10th}$
Overcrowding	-		1 - 4
Health reasons	-		1 - 4
Insanitary conditions	-		1 - 4
Special reasons	-		1 - 4
Each year of marriage since September) 1939 - up to a maximum of 2 points)	-		$\frac{1}{4}$
Each six months on the Housing Office) Register for the first three years)	-		$\frac{1}{2}$
Each six months thereafter	-		$\frac{3}{4}$

Applications are only accepted from persons who either live or work within the Harpenden Urban District and regard is paid to an applicant's income before the application is accepted.

PETROLEUM REGULATIONS.

The provisions of the Petroleum Acts and Regulations are administered by the Department. 23 occupiers of filling stations, repair garages and other premises are licensed to store petroleum spirit and 28 visits were made to such premises during the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. SNOWDON,

Senior Sanitary Inspector.

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